

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

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1. In an interactive television system, a method comprising the acts of:
as a television program is being displayed by the interactive television system,
receiving input selecting a hyperlink that is also displayed by the interactive television
system;
in response to the input, accessing data corresponding to the hyperlink; and
pausing the display of the television program as the data corresponding to the
hyperlink is displayed by the interactive television system.
 2. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the hyperlink includes a web page
address, and wherein the data corresponding to the hyperlink includes a web page, such that the
act of accessing the data corresponding to the hyperlink comprises the act of accessing the web
page.
 3. A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising the acts of:
receiving a resume display command;
ceasing to display the data corresponding to the hyperlink; and
resuming display of the paused television program.
 4. A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising the act of receiving a
television signal in which the television program and the hyperlink are encoded.

5. A method as recited in claim 4, wherein the television signal further includes the data corresponding to the hyperlink, the method further comprising the act of storing the data corresponding to the hyperlink in memory such that the data can be retrieved from memory during the act of accessing the data.
6. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the act of pausing the display of the television program comprises the acts of:
 - recording a signal in which the television program is encoded on a recording medium associated with the interactive television system; and
 - subsequently resuming the display of the television program by accessing the signal from the recording medium in the sequence in which the signal was recorded on the recording medium, such that the television program is displayed at the point at which the television program was paused.
7. A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising the act of displaying the television program on a television included in the interactive television system and simultaneously displaying the hyperlink on the television.
8. A method as recited in claim 7, further comprising selecting a position on the television at which the hyperlink is displayed based on information included in a signal that is received by the interactive television system and in which the television program is encoded.
9. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the act of pausing the display of the television program comprises the acts of:

displaying the data corresponding to the hyperlink in a first frame on a television included in the interactive television system; and simultaneously displaying a still image associated with the television program in a second frame on the television.

10. In an interactive television system that includes a display device and a recording device, a method for pausing a television program in response to selection of a hyperlink, comprising the acts of:

displaying a television program on the display device and simultaneously displaying a hyperlink on the display device;

receiving input selecting the hyperlink;

in response to the input, accessing data corresponding to the hyperlink;

pausing the display of the television program by recording a signal in which the television program is encoded on the recording device;

displaying the data corresponding to the hyperlink on the display device; and

after the data corresponding to the hyperlink is displayed, resuming display of the paused television program, such that the television program is displayed at the point at which the television program was paused.

11. A method as recited in claim 10, further comprising the act of receiving the signal, wherein the television program and the hyperlink are encoded in the signal.

12. A method as recited in claim 11, wherein the signal further includes the data corresponding to the hyperlink, the method further comprising the act of storing the data corresponding in memory, such that the act of accessing the data corresponding to the hyperlink comprises the act of accessing the data from memory.

13. A method as recited in claim 10, wherein the hyperlink includes a web page address, and wherein the data corresponding to the hyperlink includes a web page, such that the

act of accessing the data corresponding to the hyperlink comprises the act of accessing the web page.

14. A method as recited in claim 10, wherein the data corresponding to the hyperlink is encoded in a vertical blanking interval of the signal.

15. A method as recited in claim 14, wherein the data corresponding to the hyperlink is received as the television program is displayed on the display device.

16. A method as recited in claim 14, wherein the data corresponding to the hyperlink is received prior to displaying the hyperlink on the display device.

17. A method as recited in claim 14, wherein the data corresponding to the hyperlink comprises an interval page embedded within the signal.

18. A method as recited in claim 10, further comprising the acts of:

receiving the signal in which the television program is encoded on a first channel; and

receiving the data corresponding to the hyperlink on a data channel that is different from the first channel.

19. A method as recited in claim 10, wherein the act of displaying the data corresponding to the hyperlink on the display device comprises the acts of:

displaying the data corresponding to the hyperlink in a first frame on the display device; and

simultaneously displaying a still image associated with the paused television program in a second frame on the display device.

20. In an interactive television system having access to the Internet and including a display device and a recording device, a method for pausing a television program in response to selection of a hyperlink, comprising the acts of:

receiving a signal in which the television program and the hyperlink are encoded;

displaying the television program on the display device and simultaneously displaying the hyperlink on the display device;

receiving input selecting the hyperlink;

in response to receiving input, using an address specified by the hyperlink, accessing the Internet and obtaining data corresponding to the hyperlink;

pausing the display of the television program by recording the signal in which the television program is encoded on the recording device;

as the display of the television program is paused, displaying the data corresponding to the hyperlink;

resuming display of the paused television program by accessing the signal recorded on the recording medium, while continuing to record the signal to the recording medium as the signal is received by the interactive television system, such that the television program is displayed at the point at which the television program was paused.

21. A method as recited in claim 20, wherein the input is received from at least one of a mouse, a remote control device, a voice activation mechanism, and a keyboard.

22. A method as recited in claim 20, further comprising the act of receiving a resume display command, wherein the act of resuming display of the paused television program is conducted in response to the resume display command.
23. A method as recited in claim 20, wherein the hyperlink is encoded in a vertical blanking interval of the signal.
24. A method as recited in claim 20, wherein the act of resuming display of the paused television program comprises:
- continuing to record the signal to the recording medium as the signal is received by the interactive television system;
- accessing the signal recorded on the recording medium in a first-in, first-out manner; and
- displaying the television program encoded in the accessed signal.
25. A method as recited in claim 20, wherein the display device comprises a television.

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26. A computer program product for implementing, in an interactive television system, a method for pausing a television program in response to selection of a hyperlink, wherein the computer program product comprises:

a machine-readable medium carrying executable instructions that, when executed by a processor of the interactive television system, cause the interactive television system to perform the method, including the acts of:

as a television program is being displayed by the interactive television system, receiving input selecting a hyperlink that is also displayed by the interactive television system;

in response to the input, accessing data corresponding to the hyperlink;

and

pausing the display of the television program as the data corresponding to the hyperlink is displayed by the interactive television system.

27. A computer program product as recited in claim 26, wherein the hyperlink includes a web page address, and wherein the data corresponding to the hyperlink includes a web page, such that the act of accessing the data corresponding to the hyperlink comprises the act of accessing the web page.

28. A computer program product as recited in claim 26, wherein the method further comprises the acts of:

receiving a resume display command;

ceasing to display the data corresponding to the hyperlink; and

resuming display of the paused television program.

29. A computer program product as recited in claim 26, wherein the method further comprises the act receiving a television signal in which the television program and the hyperlink are encoded.

30. A computer program product as recited in claim 26, wherein the act of pausing the display of the television program comprises the acts of:

recording a signal in which the television program is encoded on a recording medium associated with the interactive television system; and

subsequently resuming the display of the television program by accessing the signal from the recording medium in the sequence in which the signal was recorded on the recording medium, such that the television program is displayed at the point at which the television program was paused.

31. A computer program product as recited in claim 26, wherein the act of pausing the display of the television program comprises the acts of:

displaying the data corresponding to the hyperlink in a first frame on a television included in the interactive television system; and

simultaneously displaying a still image associated with the television program in a second frame on the television.

32. An interactive television system, comprising:

a display device;

means for receiving input selecting a hyperlink that is also displayed on the display device as a television program is also being displayed on the display device;

means for accessing data corresponding to the hyperlink in response to the input;

and

means for pausing the display of the television program as the data corresponding to the hyperlink is displayed on the display device.

33. An interactive television system as recited in claim 31, further comprising means for receiving the signal, wherein the television program and the hyperlink are encoded in the signal.

34. An interactive television system as recited in claim 31, wherein the means for pausing the display of the television program comprises a recording device.

35. An interactive television system as recited in claim 31, wherein the recording device comprises:

means for recording a signal in which the television program is encoded; and

means for subsequently resuming the display of the television program by accessing the recorded signal in the sequence in which the signal was recorded, such that the television program is displayed at the point at which the television program was paused.

36. An interactive television system as recited in claim 31, wherein:
the data corresponding to the hyperlink includes a web page; and
the means for accessing the data comprise an Internet connection for retrieving
the web page
37. An interactive television system as recited in claim 31, wherein the data
corresponding to the hyperlink comprises an interval page embedded within a signal in which
the television program is encoded.
38. An interactive television system as recited in claim 31, further comprising:
means for displaying the data corresponding to the hyperlink in a first frame on
the display device; and
means for simultaneously displaying a still image associated with the paused
television program in a second frame on the display device.